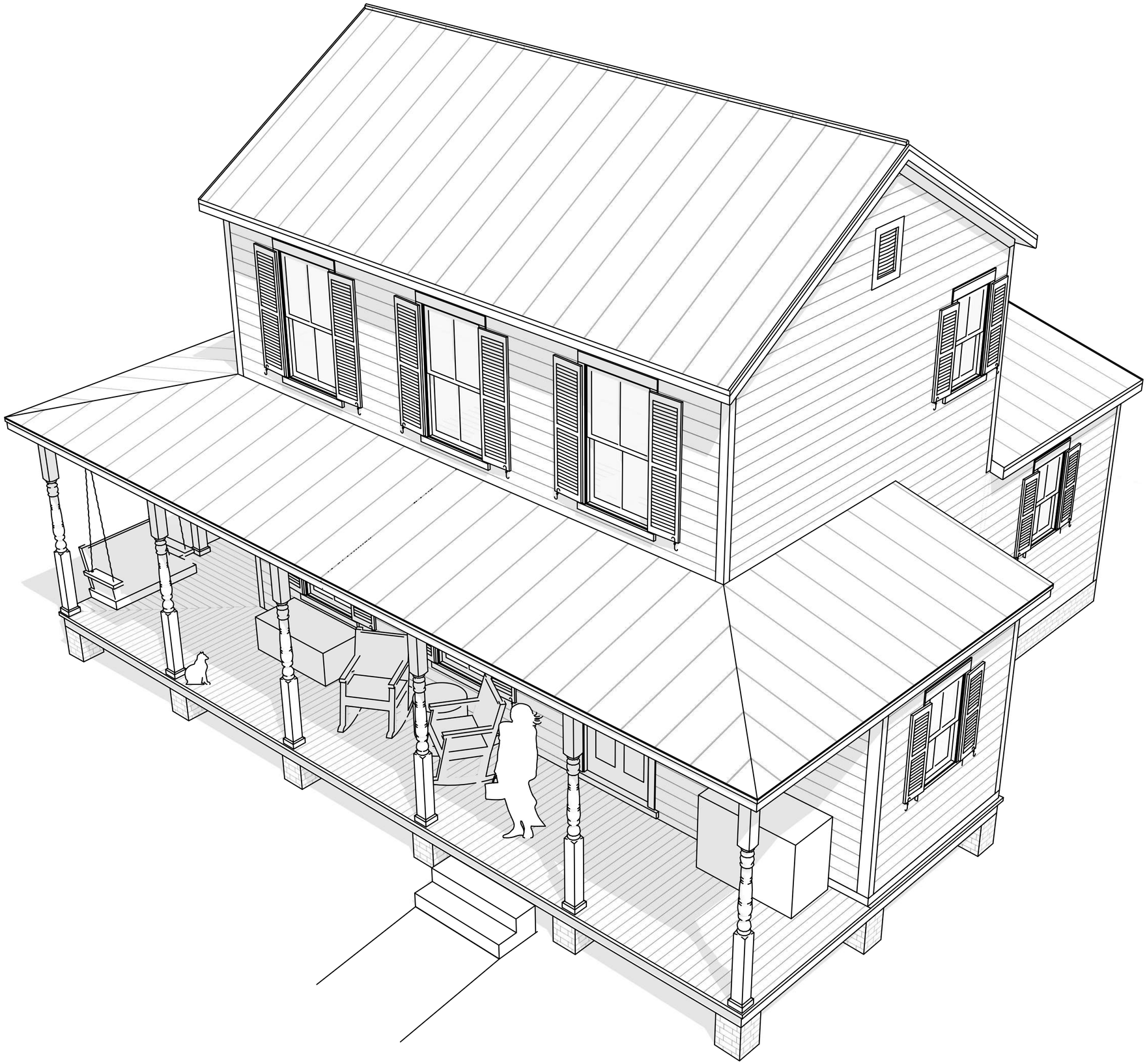


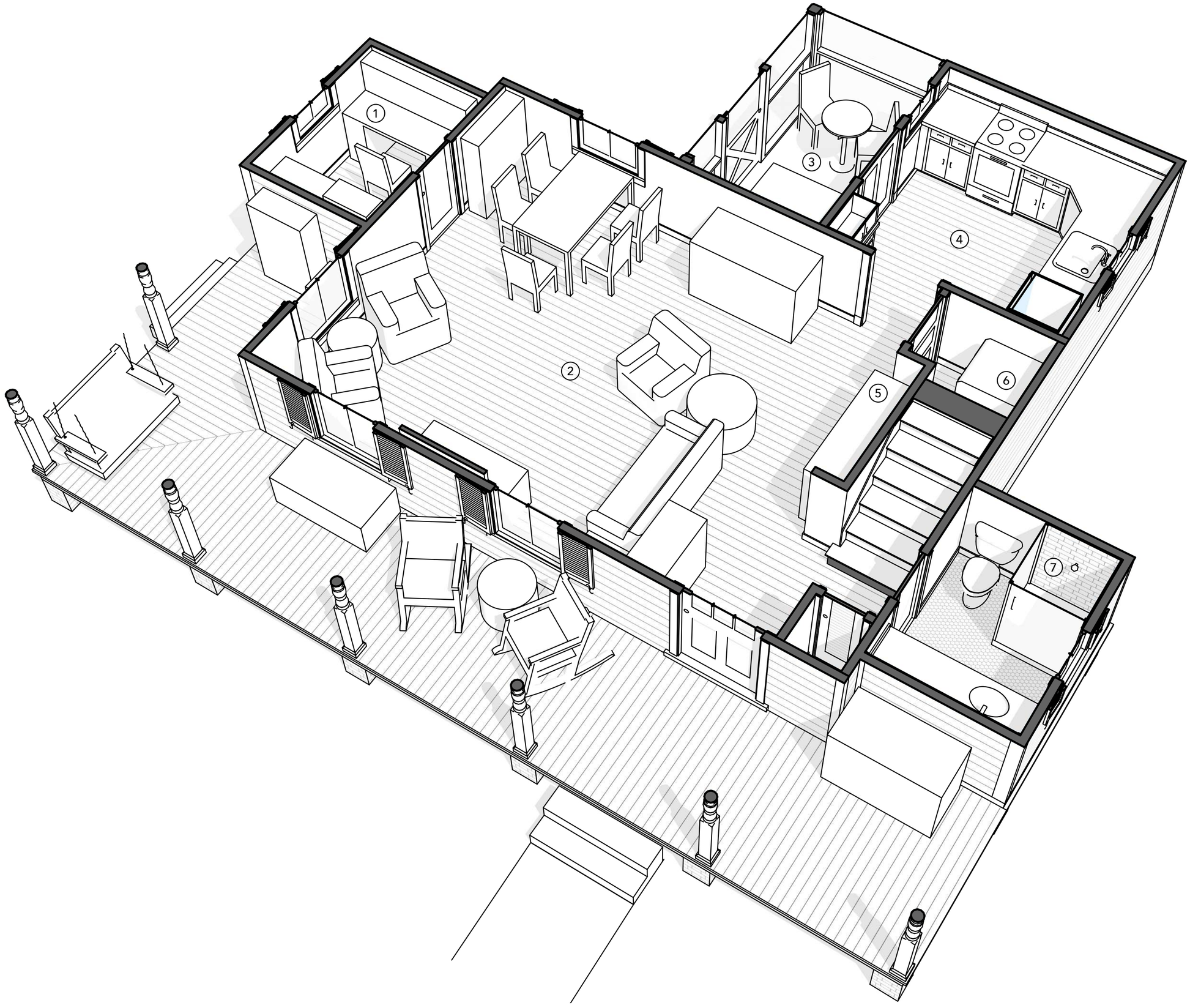
My Starter Farmhouses are designed with interchangeable options (like porches, interior layouts, and rear additions). Caroline is a variation with an open living area and a wrap-around porch. Also, this variation has many additions: a kitchen and screen porch to the rear, a side addition with a downstairs bathroom, and another side addition with a small room, which can be an office or other function.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

DESIGN OVERVIEW

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

Each of the Starter Farmhouse designs begin as a 16x24 primary massing – about 750 square feet at the smallest. In a time before 30-year mortgages, houses usually started this small and grew as needed. These additions gave a sense of personality and charm to each house. Likewise, you'll be able to enlarge this design by choosing from a series of additions. Or you can build it all at once.



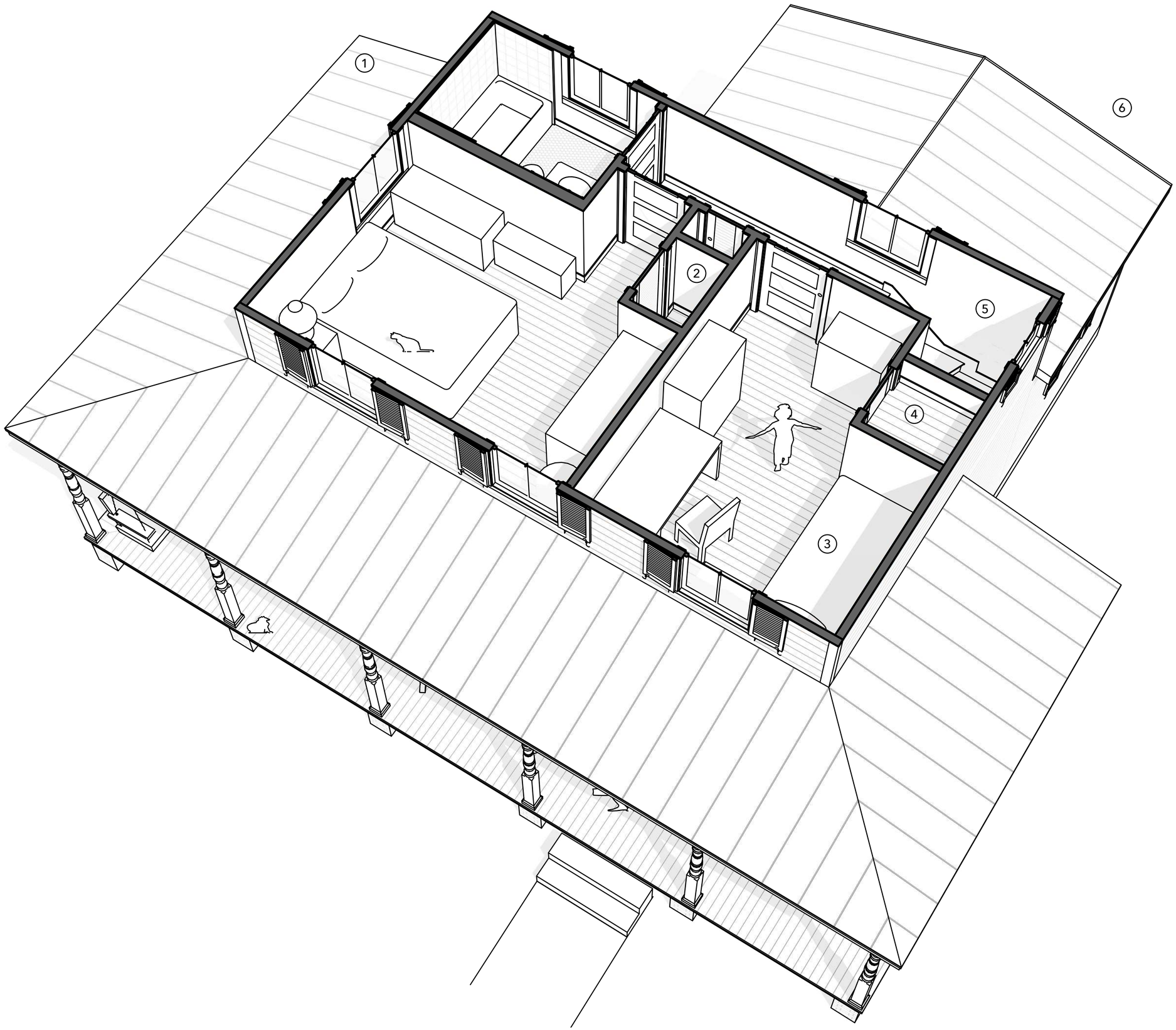
(1) A tiny office is shown here, but it could be storage, laundry, or even a guest bedroom. It would be a true "bed-room", with only space for a queen-size bed and a shelving unit. **(2)** The lower level of this house is arranged in an open plan. Because of this layout, it can work well for large gatherings. However, it also retains intimacy and formality by placing utilitarian functions in separate rooms.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

DOWNSTAIRS PLAN

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

(3) The screen porch to the rear can function as a mudroom. **(4)** This kitchen isn't an "exhibition kitchen" open to the living area. You don't need to keep it spotless just in case you have visitors. **(5)** This wall could hold various functions: built-in cabinets, coat hooks, a movie screen, or a woodstove. **(6)** The laundry closet. **(7)** Stacked laundry machines could be included here, instead of this shower.



(1) The lower roofs surround the house, but they'd barely be noticeable from upstairs (unless you're standing right next to a window). **(2)** The closets here can be omitted or rearranged, depending on preferences. **(3)** The bedroom alcove needs enough space for a bed (7 feet, which is probably required by code). With head height minimums, this significantly limits the stairs and the whole design.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

UPSTAIRS PLAN

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

(4) For stairway head clearances (80" min), this closet needs that raised platform. **(5)** Two windows are added by the winder stairs, just in case a rear addition is added (blocking one). One window here is important. **(6)** The rear kitchen/porch can become a hyphen connecting to a garage. Garages tend to be massive, blocking views and light. A hyphen preserves natural lighting and cross breezes.

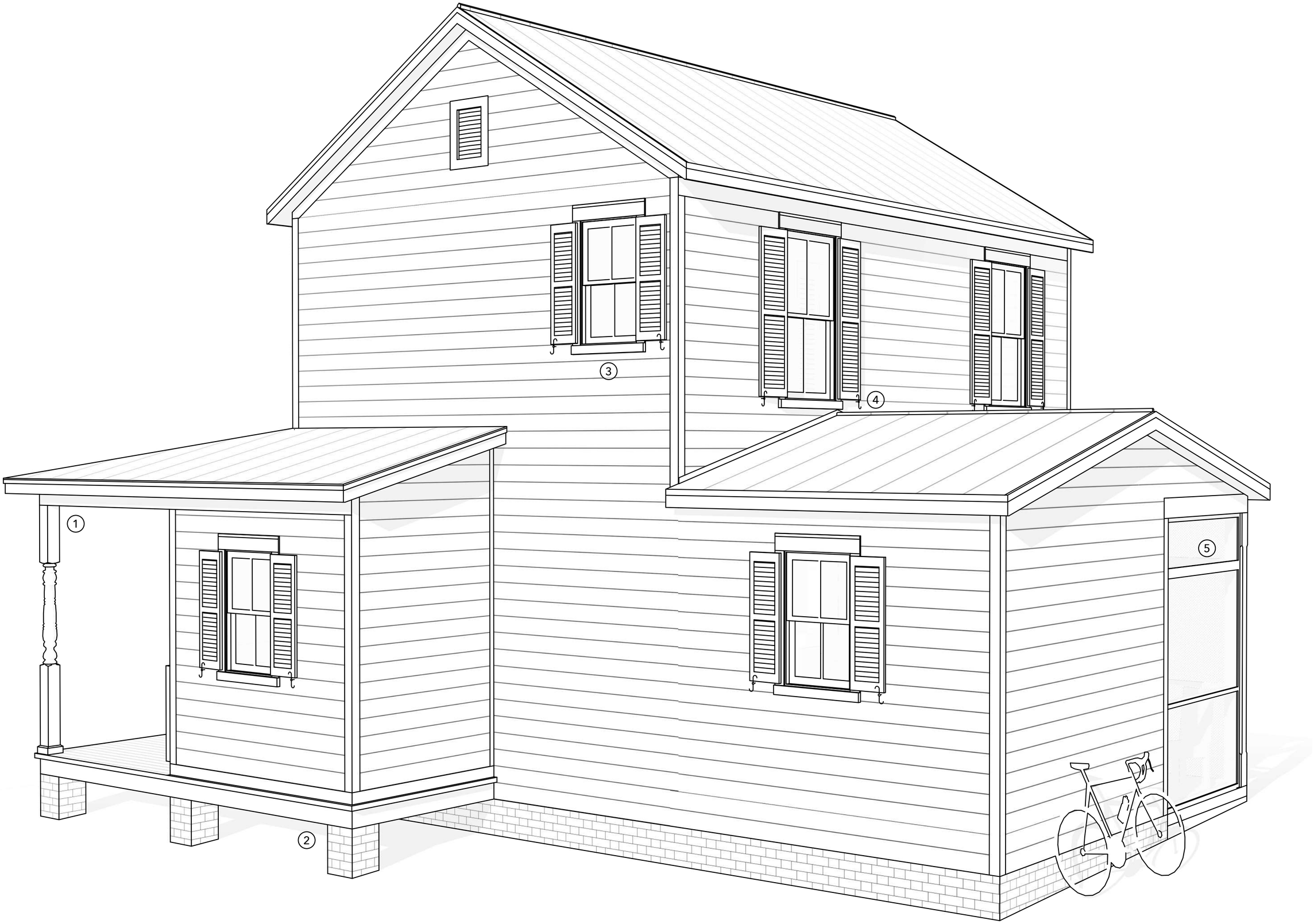
Caroline's Farmhouse has a wrap-around porch with many small additions. Though it would look great surrounded by a large field, it could also fit well in a 50'x50' clearing in a forest. The design is simple, economical, and easy to adapt. **(1)** Operable shutters are functional. If cost is an issue, just omit them. No fakes. **(2)** The large windows on the lower level still look great if the porch is removed.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

FRONT OF THE HOUSE

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

(3) A note of caution– even though this is perhaps the simplest eave imaginable, builders tend to mangle historical details like this by building "pork chop eaves." **(4)** The porch roof shouldn't be too steep. It may need long gutters, and downspouts at the side rooms. **(5)** The porch is low to the ground with only 3 steps down, to avoid railings (with strict codes, they're expensive to build right).



(1) The porch columns could have more gingerbread added to them, perhaps as a future renovation. Such decorations are not easily to apply to most new houses. **(2)** The side room additions are designed to look like filled-in porch bays, requiring an insulated and ventilated floor assembly. Overall, it's easy but unconventional. This adds character and a sense of history to the house's design.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

BACK OF THE HOUSE

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

(3) This window could be omitted, but its opening should at least be framed in. That's because, with a rear addition, the window at the upstairs hall would be closed up, making a dark, stuffy space. **(4)** The rear roof can be slightly shallower, to avoid this pinch point. **(5)** The screen porch can function as a mudroom, and can be walled in. This is a potential connection point to a future attached garage.

(1) The porch's open crawlspace can be enclosed with wooden lattice (and a metal screen on the inside. The decking has to be low to avoid the need for a guardrail, but the compromise is that this crawlspace is tiny. **(2)** You can have a basement instead of a conditioned crawlspace. Put the basement stairs directly under the other stairs. **(3)** The open living area has many possible arrangements.

CAROLINE'S STARTER FARMHOUSE

SECTION PERSPECTIVE

A DESIGN BY JAY OSBORNE

(4) The roof can be framed with normal trusses. The slope corresponds to historical roof pitches. Making it shallower could reduce its old fashioned charm. **(5)** The kitchen has space for open shelves or narrow cabinets, which are better for pantries. **(6)** The kitchen has many windows to improve the daylighting and cross breezes. Balanced light sources make a space feel more cozy and inviting.